

# THE POLISH REVIEW

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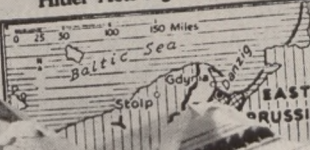
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SIX YEARS AGO...



"THERE IS ALSO THE QUESTION OF (SOVIET) SECRET POLICE IN POLAND. THIS HAS STILL GOT TO BE CLEARED UP."

—Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin speaking on Foreign Policy to the House of Commons, August 20, 1945.

## THE POTSDAM ACCOMPLISHMENT\*

by FELIX MORLEY

**A** LITTLE less than a quarter of a century separated the first partitioning of Poland, in 1772, from the second and fatal division of that unhappy country, between Russia and Prussia, in 1793.

Just over a quarter of a century separates the first partitioning of Prussia, legalized by the Treaty of Versailles early in 1920, from the second and far more drastic division of its territory tersely announced in Section IX of the Berlin Agreement of August 2, 1945.

Reference to any good historical atlas will show how the Eighteenth Century expansion of Prussia is being matched by a retributive Twentieth Century contraction. But the parallel is more arresting than exact.

When Poland was obliterated it was the Russia of the Empress Catharine (1762-97) which profited most thereby. Now that Poland is being restored again, the similarly expansionist Russia of Josef Stalin is still the principal beneficiary. Only for the relatively brief period between the first and second World Wars did Poland regain any of the territory taken from her by Catharine the Great. Now the Russian frontier moves westward again, Britain and the United States acquiescing today as Prussia and Austria acquiesced a century and a half ago.

... The Russian policy, while not necessarily at variance with that of Great Britain, is the more ambitious and the more subtle of the two. It aims to establish a Poland so racially incongruous and strategically helpless that all future Polish governments will have to rely on continuous Russian support. The price of this support will, of course, be that control of Polish policy by Moscow which is already apparent. This control is further assured by outright Russian annexation of the Baltic coast to the gates of Danzig, giving the Red Fleet the excellent naval base of Koenigsberg. Thus post-war Poland will always be subject to a Russian blockade.

... In order to secure agreement at Potsdam both the Russians and the British made concessions, though in neither case at their own expense.

The British seemingly agreed to the final elimination of the little Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as well as to the creation of a grotesque Poland, which from the viewpoint of London has the purely negative advantage of liquidating Prussia. The Polish settlement, if it can be called such,

is a sad inaugural action for Mr. Attlee, whose Labor Party has paid much verbal tribute to self-determination and decisions by democratic process.

Incidentally, this settlement scarcely conforms with Article 55 of the San Francisco Charter, which demands "respect for the principle of . . . self-determination of peoples."

The Russians, on their part, agree to delimiting their zone of influence at the Oder River, though their area of military occupation extends far to the west of this. And the Russians further agree to tolerate the effort to establish a democratic German buffer state, shorn of Prussia, even though this holds some promise of blocking further Communist penetration in western Europe.

Our own role, apparently, is to placate disgruntled France and to endeavor to restore a modified form of capitalism in western Europe—meantime, however, working to strengthen Communist Russia at the expense of Poland and backing the Communist effort to launch a red revolution in Spain. It is the role of a good-natured, wealthy and perhaps somewhat doddering Uncle, who seeks to keep the peace by even-handed distribution of largesse to two shrewd, impetuous, hard-boiled and mutually mistrustful nephews.

### THE POLISH REVIEW

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Six Years Ago . . .

Annual Subscription, Five Dollars—Single Copy, Twenty Cents

\* Excerpts from *Human Events*, Vol. II, No. 32, Aug. 8, 1945.



# POLAND—THE ALLY WHO LOST

September 1, 1939 — September 1, 1945

by W. M. BESTERMAN



SIX years of war have cost Poland six million dead, the ravaging of her cities, her industry and her agriculture, the ruin of her cultural institutions, the loss of more than 46 per cent of her national territory and—the loss of her independence through complete subservience to a neighboring, totalitarian power.

No enemy of the United Nations can claim a more devastating inventory. No enemy of the United Nations has taken more appalling punishment than has the nation which was the first to fight German aggression

and which earned for itself Franklin Delano Roosevelt's appreciative tribute, expressed in his words "Poland—inspiration of nations . . ."

Poland is the only member of the winning team of the United Nations to have lost the war. The truth of this statement is no less tragic because it is paradoxical.

When in 1939 Hitler put the loaded pistol to Poland's head, she was faced with the choice of fighting or losing a considerable part of her territory, adopting a totalitarian form of government, and becoming Germany's satellite. Refusing to follow Czechoslovakia's example, Poland chose to fight against overwhelming odds.

Poland made her choice despite the fact that her Allies—France and Great Britain—were unprepared and far away, while the then recent Hitler-Stalin pact foreshadowed a military and political cooperation of the two totalitarian powers that could only lead to Poland's doom.

There is no blemish on Poland's war record. The Poles fought within their country until it was overrun by the military might of Germany and Russia, joining forces all along the "Curzon"—or as it was then much more properly called—the Ribbentrop-Molotov Line. But there was no Pétain in Poland to sign an armistice, just as there had been no Hacha in Poland to sign an unconditional surrender without firing a shot. Just as there was no Polish Quisling to help the Germans enslave the Polish people.

No Pole made any deal with the enemy in this war.

Fighting in Poland, openly and in the Underground, fighting in Norway, in France, in the Battle of Britain, in Africa, in Italy, on the seven seas and in the skies all over Europe, in Normandy, in Belgium, in Holland and in Germany, the Poles lived and died with the unshaken belief that whatever appeasements had been made in the past, no one can appease justice.

Obviously, they were wrong . . .

Six years have elapsed since the first German bombs killed Polish children on the streets of

Warsaw. Six years of untold sacrifices and suffering of the Polish people, of all the peoples of the world. But while Poland's victorious Allies lived to see the day of unprecedented triumph, the only losing member of the winning team is still confronted with the fact that the darkest hour of its thousand-year-old history has not yet come to an end.

No high-sounding words can obscure the fact that the end of the war has found Poland in the clutches of a foreign, totalitarian rule and under an administration controlled by professional "exporters" of the Soviet form of government, alien and repulsive to the Polish people. Nothing can obscure the fact that no representative Pole who would be ready to associate himself with this foreign rule over Poland was to be found in Poland itself and that "collaborationists" had to be first forced into submission when staying abroad, and then flown to a foreign capital to receive their appointment to government jobs. No propaganda can obscure the fact that Poland's heroic Underground fighters are being imprisoned and deported by a foreign secret police. Nothing more tragic could be submitted to the astonished eyes of humanity than the fact that while Poland is the only nation which has no traitors to place before the court, her best sons are being tried before a foreign tribunal for the crime of having been faithful to their country's and to the Allies' cause. Nobody would dare to deny that there is no freedom of the press and no freedom of speech in Poland today. And nobody would venture to say that the Polish people have a voice in the changes that are now being hastily introduced in Poland's political, economic and social life, before there is even talk of setting any date for "free and unfettered" elections.

The tragedy of the homeless Polish sailor, soldier and slaweworker driven into Germany, as well as the partition of Poland's territory, supplement but by no means complete the picture of the defeat suffered by Poland in World War II.

(Please turn to page 14)



Poland: homeless and destitute.



# POLAND HAS EARNED THE RIGHT TO REAL INDEPENDENCE

by COLONEL HENRYK PIATKOWSKI



THE contribution of Poland to the war effort oscillated from the high point of the September, 1939, Campaign when the Polish Armed Forces alone engaged the whole might of Germany, to the moment, right after that campaign when the Polish Forces were actively represented only by a few warships. From then on, however, this effort grew steadily in volume. Soon after Poland was occupied, the Home Army organized to fight the invader,

at the same time that a new Polish Army arose in France. There also, our Air Force was reformed.

The French and the Norwegian Campaigns were the first after the war in Poland in which the Poles took active part.

Following the fall of France, the Army was represented solely by the independent Carpathian Brigade which was to win fame during the Libyan Campaign in the Middle East and by units of the Polish First Army Corps in Scotland which were soon to defend the northeastern coast against a German invasion of the British Isles.

During the crucial Battle of Britain, when its help was sorely needed, the Polish Air Force gave it freely, for which it gained great glory. From that moment on, Polish fliers fought side by side with the RAF until victory was won.

At the time when Polish Forces abroad were reforming on British soil, in Poland proper the organization of resistance to the occupying forces was undertaken on a large scale. The Polish Home Army became the nucleus of this powerful movement. Its climax came during the Warsaw Uprising in 1944.

Other Polish Forces returned to the scene of action in 1941 when the Polish-Soviet Pact freed large numbers of those who had been held in Russia. A Polish Army was formed there, followed by the organization of Polish Forces in the Middle East out of which the Polish Second Corps, that was to play so creditable a role in the long Italian Campaign, was created. During the latter part of the war, the Second Corps gave the Polish Armed Forces abroad a Commander in Chief who guided them through the most difficult period of the Polish crisis.

From D-Day on the First Polish Armored Division played an outstanding role in Western Europe, while the independent Parachute Brigade was used during the battles for Arnhem in September, 1944.

During the Second World War, the Polish Navy fought from the first day to the very last.

Now let us consider in detail the individual campaigns in which the Polish Armed Forces fought.

## (1) THE SEPTEMBER 1939 CAMPAIGN

When the war broke on September 1, 1939, Poland took upon herself the entire burden of the first campaign, thus preventing Germany from striking immediately at France and Great Britain.

The Polish Armed Forces, despite their relative weakness in strength and lack of modern weapons when compared to those of the enemy, engaged nearly all of the German land forces, at least half of the Luftwaffe and a part of the Navy.

The Polish Armed Forces in 1939 consisted of:

*The Army:* Forty infantry divisions of which two were unable to mobilize fully, while part of the rest went into action without their full strength.

Thirteen cavalry brigades of which one was completely mechanized.

*The Navy:* A number of warships and some shore defenses along the Polish coast.

*The Air Force:* Several hundred first line combat airplanes.

The Commander of the Polish Army directed the campaign until September 17 when he was cut off from his forces. After that, various units continued to fight the enemy independently; the last such action, ending on October 5, 1939, was at Kock under General Franciszek Kleeberg.

Even after the 35-day campaign had officially ended, widely scattered partisan battles continued for several months against the Germans.

One of the most important operations during the Campaign was the counterattack by General Kutrzeba's Army Group (the Poznan and Pomorze Armies) against the northern flank of General Rundstedt's Army. This unexpected counteroffensive helped defeat several German Eighth Army divisions under General Blaskowitz, and checked General Reichenau's Tenth Army offensive on the Central Vistula Front. Later when the Germans turned back this counterattack, General Kutrzeba, though surrounded at Kutno, succeeded in breaking through to Warsaw.

Other characteristic moments that deserve mention were the battles between Sadowa Wiszna and the Janowski Forests fought by General Sosnkowski's Army, the great defense of Warsaw, the defense of Modlin, Lwow, Hel and Westerplatte.

During this first campaign, German losses, according to neutral sources, amounted to: 91,000 killed, 150,000 wounded; 600 tanks and some 400 to 500 airplanes destroyed.

The losses incurred by the Germans in Poland were so serious that an attack on the West that same autumn proved impossible. It did not come until May, 1940. Today it is difficult to judge just how much the Polish Campaign contributed to that long postponement. Nevertheless, it is a fact that the war in Poland was followed by a long lull in action, more or less brought about by those losses.

The French mobilization and concentration of troops as well as the coming of the British Expeditionary Forces to the continent took place under cover of the Polish Campaign when Poland fought alone and completely isolated.

## (2) THE FRENCH CAMPAIGN OF 1940

The new Polish Army was formed in France partly of veterans of the September Campaign who escaped through Hungary and Rumania and partly from volunteers from the large colonies of Polish immigrants in France. Its strength totalled 100,000 men when France capitulated.

The following units took part in the French Campaign:

(Please turn to page 14)

### To a Newly Recognized Government by Joseph Randel

*Clink glasses, bow, shake hands and swear the faith  
To end all faith. The Commissars approve,  
And two Ambassadors are out of breath  
With every blandishment of second love.*

*Yours is the Polish province, yours the power;  
Westward for you the Red battalions tramp;  
And loyal men who fought before your hour  
Are safe, quite safe—in some Siberian camp.  
—The Weekly Review, London.*



*They fought alone.* Drawing by Zdzislaw Czermanski.



# "THE STRANGER"

by ORVILLE PRESCOTT \*

**THE STRANGER.** By Maria Kuncewiczowa. 224 pages. Fischer. \$2.50.



Maria Kuncewiczowa. Drawing by Feliks Topolski (June, 1945).

IN 1937, two years before Poland succumbed beneath the totalitarian wave, the memory of earlier exiles endured by many Poles in the last century must have been still strong among the destined victims of the new ordeal which was to send so many modern Poles into a far more tragic exile. In that year the literary prize of the City of Warsaw was awarded to a novel which was in part a study of the psychological effects of exile. The book was "The Stranger," by Maria Kuncewiczowa, one of Poland's most distinguished contemporary writers. "The

Stranger" is now published in an English translation.

Whether this deft and penetrating study in neuroticism can win for itself many readers seems doubtful—it is so relentless in its dissection of a diseased mind that it is painful and disturbing. But that it is completely successful, a brilliant tour de force cannot be question. Mme. Kuncewiczowa knows an uncanny amount about the irrational behavior of a certain type of human being. And that type, unfortunately, is not rare. It flourishes everywhere without the benefit of the experience of exile. She also knows a great deal about the craft of fiction. "The Stranger" is written with consummate technical finish, blurred only occasionally by what seem to be flaws in the translation.

This is the story of the last day in the life of a pernicious Polish woman. Rose had been born in Taganrog, Russia, where her parents were in exile after the abortive Polish revolt in 1863. Her early childhood was spent as a Polish girl among Russians, her later life as a "stranger" with a Russian accent in Poland. Rose never felt at home anywhere. In addition to the emotional insecurity thus caused by her exile, Rose suffered two other early defeats that left permanent scars. She became a violinist and blamed her teacher for faulty instruction that prevented her from becoming a great one. And she was jilted by her fiancé, who always remained thereafter the tragic and romantic lost love of her youth. A strong and mentally healthy person would have shaken off such trouble as only minor setbacks. But Rose was neither. Even without her exile and other misfortunes there was something weak and vicious inside her that festered and grew, ruining her own life and casting a blight on those of her husband and children.

Mme. Kuncewiczowa introduces Rose in her sixties as she rants and storms and raves in the home of her married daughter. And then through a series of marvelously deft time shifts

she fills in the background of Rose's entire life, constantly returning to her opening scene and weaving past and present into a unified whole. We see Rose's scorn and hatred and cruelty to her sorely tried and long-suffering husband, her destructive domination of her children, the world of fantasy and self-adulation in which she lived. "It wasn't possible either to rest or to know any peace of mind while Rose was there."

Rarely has a fictional character been stripped so ruthlessly bare of all pretensions. Rose's tortured egoism, her spite against life, her hypocrisy, her theatrical delight in scenes, her sadistic malevolence all made her leave "a trail of hatred" behind her. Her tears, her voracious vanity, her weakness, which she used as a weapon, and the unholy fascination of her beauty and charm were deadly and irresistible. Her husband suffered mutely for the most part, with occasional futile gestures of rebellion. Her children strove to escape her, succeeded only in part and never could escape her baleful influence. But Rose, who once was only mildly neurotic, could not stand still. She progressed with accelerating momentum on the downward slope to madness until her final plunge into a collapse of all personality followed by death itself.

Such a woman sounds grim enough, even melodramatic. But Mme. Kuncewiczowa does not write grimly nor melodramatically. Her tone is always cool and restrained, her manner always analytical and objective. One might almost say that "The Stranger" is a comic book in a ghastly way. The comedy may be of the ironic kind that is supposed to arouse the laughter of the gods, but still an admiring appreciation is induced by "The Stranger" that is nearer laughter than anything else—since it contains no element of sympathy or of emotional concern. Rose is there to be looked at with intellectual interest, to be examined, like a butterfly impaled by a pin in a specimen case.

Storm Jameson in an effusive introduction to "The Stranger" suggests that Rose, wounded by exile and romantic illusions, may be an allegory of Poland. This seems to me an unnecessary and far-fetched interpretation. "The Stranger" can stand on its own feet, a book which does not tell you about a horrible woman but which demonstrates in thought and speech and action just what such a woman is like from the inside out. Recent fiction has abounded with women more violently evil than Rose. But there have been few capable of giving you such genuine creeps, because few have been so remorselessly real.

*"I believe that when Maria wrote this book, her future, of an exile, was already alive in her. Already without having pronounced them, she knew the words an exile uses. She had only to insist lightly for them to spring out, as fresh, fresher than words meaning freedom, security, happiness. The images of exile leaned towards her, as do figures in the painting of a landscape one expects to visit . . . But far from being dimmed by this reflection in it of a hazardous future, the book has an enchanting vitality, even a gaiety. If you believe the signs the writer makes from behind her words, human loneliness, disappointment, unassuaged hunger, have, all of them, the taste and colors of a long happy life. It is not for a poet to write of defeat. The end of the Stranger, her heureuse et profitable Mort, is reconciliation and triumph."*

*"The Stranger was translated into Czech, Italian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Dutch. It was to have been published in Germany in the autumn of 1939, but the Germans were not, that autumn, well disposed towards Polish culture. The following spring they reached Paris in time to make it impossible for a French translation to appear in the bookshops. The English version appears in a happier season."*

—From Storm Jameson's Introduction to The Stranger.

\* From *The New York Times*, August 7, 1945.



# "I MADE FINE FRIENDS IN POLAND"

*As Told by Pilot Officer Hubert Brooks to Maria Lubinska*

*Pilot Officer Hubert Brooks of the Royal Canadian Air Force was born in Alberta, Canada in 1921 and was educated in Montreal. In 1940 he enlisted in the R.C.A.F. and went overseas following his training in Canada. This story was told in Polish, which he now speaks fluently. When referring to the Polish soil, he uses such expression as: "My region; our mountains, our people." So far as we know, Pilot Officer Brooks is the only Canadian who was a member of the Polish Home Army.*

IN April, 1942 I was a member of a Wellington bomber crew assigned to a raid on Hamburg. On the run-up from Hamburg both engines caught fire. For about twenty minutes we played from starboard to port engine, but were finally obliged to bail out, at 1.30 a. m. over German territory. It was pitch dark below, but we all landed safely except our air gunner, who had been killed. We scattered at once from the crashed plane, hoping to reach friendly country, but by 10 in the morning all five of us had been recaptured by the Germans. Our captors were friendly enough. After brief questioning, we were sent to different prison camps. Mine was located in Silesia, not far from the old Polish border. Most of my fellow-prisoners were British, together with a few from the Polish Air Force, operating from the United Kingdom. The living conditions were for the most part poor, the food very bad. Except for the help of the Red Cross many of us should certainly not have survived.

From the moment of my capture the thought uppermost in my mind was escape. But—how? Two months later a chance came. I got away, and reached Cracow, a city eighty miles distant. Unfortunately I was arrested there by the Gestapo and, after a cursory examination, sent back to the main camp. As punishment I received ten days' solitary confinement, with bread and water. Each third day, however, I was given German rations: thin, watery soup, two potatoes, one small slice of bread.

Two months later came my second escape—this time through the Carpathian Mountains, a very rough and difficult terrain. But the Czech mountaineers gave me food and every possible assistance, so that I finally reached Vienna, having covered approximately one hundred and eighty miles. There as I was boarding a night train for Italy, I was detected by the *Bahnschutz* (Railway Police). And, of course, I soon found myself back in the same old camp—fourteen days' confinement this time, with the same meager fare.

Came my third attempt. And this time, thanks to contacts made in the prison camp with the Polish Underground Army, which we called 'A. K.'—*Armja Krajowa*, I made a clear getaway. I was directed to a certain town in Poland, where I contacted other members of the Home Army. Knowing nothing of the Polish language, I lost no time in starting my 'education.' My teacher was an estimable lady, eighty years young, an active member of the Underground Army. As we both understood French, the matter of instruction was greatly simplified. All the same, she started me off with the A-B-C's, as if I were a small boy. Day after day we worked. She was a lady of infinite resource, capable and patient and kind. And daring—for next door lived a *Volksdeutsche*, a German spy. If the good lady had been caught in such an act, she would have been instantly shot.

All this time I was getting instruction from the A. K. organization as well. This group had come into being very shortly after Poland was overrun by the Germans, and had gradually extended throughout the length and breadth of the country. I linked up with a group which had been organized



Pilot Officer Hubert Brooks.

south of Cracow. Consisting of only forty members at the start, this detachment had gradually spread its activities over an area of five thousand square miles—from the towns of Myslenice and Zakopane to the north and south, and Babia Gora and Grygow to the west and east. The country was mountainous, forest-clad and sparsely populated. As the months passed, our detachment grew larger and larger, its membership embracing everything from simple mountain lads to university graduates. As soon as the detachment grew from forty to one hundred and

twenty members, a company was formed. I was placed in charge of a group of forty. Having little to carry on with, we were desperately in need of arms. And we got them, the main source of supply—an involuntary source, I confess—being the Germans. Frequently we made attacks on German garrisons, and our stock of arms grew surprisingly.

In due course our brigade had increased to four battalions, four companies to a battalion, our sphere of operation being confined to the Limanowa district of Southwestern Poland. Many were the objectives assigned to my section: the sabotage of a railway; the liquidation of German agents; ambushing a convoy; confiscation of Polish food supplies en route to Germany, such as cattle, grain, potatoes, and so forth. Included in the list of battles, the following seem to deserve special mention: The fight with German storm troopers at Kamienica, where the whole company surrendered and we got their arms and supplies; the Battle of Lacko, where we disarmed a body of twenty *Todt-Organizations* (Todt was the famous constructor of the Siegfried Line); the famous Battle of Wisniowa and Lipnik, where we fought for almost a week, destroying several tanks and armored cars, and wiping out over one hundred of the German soldiery; here we fought against a force of more than three thousand Germans, but we withdrew only when the enemy received reinforcements. Two days later, my forty men and I were surrounded by the Germans in the mountains of Stecin; however, we succeeded in withdrawing without a single casualty. For this I was awarded the Cross of Valor—corresponding to the British D.F.C. And there was the battle of Szawa, lasting over a week. Here two of our battalions were attacked from both east and west by more than five thousand German troops. They withdrew finally, however, on account of the Russian offensive in January, 1945.

But our victories were costly. Invariably, German sadism and vengeance were wreaked upon the local civilian population. There was not merely one Polish 'Lidice.' The towns of Wisniowa and Lipnik, for example, were burned to the ground, and many peasants were burned alive. The entire village of Porabka was wiped from the face of the earth, twenty-five of the villagers being locked in a barn and cre-

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# THE BRIDGES OF WARSAW\*

by ZYGMUNT NOWAKOWSKI



Commemorative plaque immured in 1582 in the Gunpowder Tower of Warsaw's first bridge in tribute to King Zygmunt August, who began construction in 1568 and to Queen Anna Jagiellonka, who brought it to completion in 1573.

## BRIDGE STREET

Situated on the Vistula River, Warsaw is bound to it inextricably, and forever. The opposing banks of the Vistula were first joined by a bridge, construction of which was begun by King Zygmunt August and completed by Queen Anna Jagiellonka. On June 24, 1568, at five "on the half-clock" Master Erazm of Zakroczym drove the first pile into the ground. Construction was not ended until 1573, so that Jan Kochanowski, the greatest Polish poet of the Renaissance, was a trifle premature when he wrote his poem *For the Warsaw Bridge*:

"Implacable Vistula! In vain thy horns dost show,  
In vain dost rape the mainland, stop traffic's mighty flow.  
To curb thy wicked habits King August found a ruse,  
No longer wilt be able thy powers to abuse.  
For without oars and ferries, with a dry foot instead,  
O'er thy unmastered body all can now safely tread."

The last of the Jagiellonian Kings had already gone to his Maker when the bridge was ready. Immured in the Gunpowder Tower was a plaque bearing a proud inscription that proclaimed to the world and to posterity that its founder was "*Magnorum regum coniux, soror, filia.*" The tablet managed to be preserved intact up to 1939, while the bridge was carried away by the Vistula's swollen waters as early as the turn of the 17th century. It was supposedly the largest bridge in the Europe of that day. Yet, all that remained were the oaken piles deeply imbedded in the river. After the abortive 1831 Uprising against the Russians, Paskiewicz, the Russian Viceroy in Warsaw, had furniture fashioned out of them.

In his *Theatrum Urbium Orbis Terrarum*, published in Cologne on the Rhine in 1593, the traveler George Braun writes about Queen Anna's bridge as if it were a great rarity. Let us remember that Budapest, a city famous for its eight bridges, waited for the first of them up to the middle of the 19th century, when Pest joined up with Buda. Warsaw and its Praga had done this three hundred years earlier.

Today this bridge is no more, just as Warsaw no longer exists. Cologne, where appeared the book containing praise of Warsaw, likewise has suffered damage, as did no doubt the bridge on the Rhine, as suffered so many, many cities Orbis Terrarum. But much less remains of Warsaw than of other capitals forming the backdrop for the dreadful

\* Translation of an article which appeared in *Tygodnik Polski*, New York, August 5, 1945. Vol. 3, No. 30.

"Theatrum" of this war. Nevertheless the place has remained. *Locus ubi Troia*. It alone was, is and always will be the same. The place and the Vistula.

Warsaw is a city of paradoxes. The bridge of the good, worthy Anna Jagiellonka, wife of the great King Stefan, has not been in existence these 350 years, new bridges were built elsewhere, far from the tower with the proud inscription, and yet the street leading to the bridge that was destroyed in 1603, always was and always will be known as "Bridge Street" (*Mostowa*). It might follow from this that Warsaw is a city of traditions, but that would be an erroneous deduction. Warsaw is not a city of tradition. It is a city of history. It does not care about tradition or legend, secure in the knowledge that it has and will have its history.

In the very name Bridge Street, in this outmoded appellation, seemingly senseless, lies a paradox, but in addition to the paradox there is hidden a deeper meaning: Warsaw, though facing South and West, wishes to be a bridge linking Europe with the East and the North. The age-old persistent work on the construction of a bridge that would unite Europe and Asia is Warsaw's role, her destiny and her responsibility springing from her geographical location.

## THE HEART OF EUROPE

If we draw a vertical line between the northernmost and southernmost points in Europe and a horizontal line between Europe's easternmost and westernmost regions, the two will meet and cross near Warsaw. The Polish capital lies midway between the Baltic and the stormy Black Sea and midway between the blue Adriatic and that portion of the Arctic Ocean which is known as the White Sea. Furthermore, it is equidistant from the English



Contemporary engraving showing Warsaw bridge built in 1573.

Roman Kutylowski Collection

the most dynamic and joyous cities of Europe—today Warsaw lies at the heart of the Way of the Cross. Six years ago two high tension lines cut each other at Warsaw, now all the lines of the highest tension of both pain and heroism meet there. Alone in its battle for freedom, abandoned by God and by people, Warsaw is the peak of the world's Golgotha. It dominates the entire tragic *Theatrum* of the ruined cities Orbis Terrarum.

One hundred years ago, the Romantic poet Juliusz Slowacki, sketched this geographical summary of Europe:

"If Europe be a nymph  
—Naples  
Is her bright blue eye—  
Warsaw  
Her heart—thorns in her  
leg are Sebastopol,  
Azof, Odessa, Petersburg,  
Mitau—  
Paris her head—and London  
her starched  
Collar—while Rome is  
her Scapula."

## "CAPITAL OF THE SPIRIT"

Angry risen waters and ice wrecked the work of Anna Jagiellonka. Still Warsaw stubbornly sought to join both banks of the Vistula. The history of bridge construction in Warsaw is instructive. It teaches that

besides the elements which could not be mastered for so long, human forces also conspired. Evil forces. They were in league with the water.

The struggle with the river itself lasted a century and a half and not until 1755 did there come into being—but in another place—a permanent bridge, which remained for a long time, for all of forty years. It was destroyed by the Russians, burned and torn down by Suvorov with whose name is associated the massacre of Praga, the suburb on the right bank of the Vistula. The 150th anniversary of the horrible slaughter which aroused the indignation of all contemporary civilized Europe, fell on November 4, 1944. The monstrous carnage had given rise to many drawings, many poems and many descriptions. Englishmen, Frenchmen, even Germans wrote about it. So did Poles. Among the latter, the shoemaker patriot of Warsaw, Kilinski, said: "Ah, my God, what great wailing there was, people walked about the battlefield and there some looked for brothers and others for their fathers. Ah, there could be no more terrible judgment day than that sight. Whoever recognized his killed, lifted him like a piece of wood and carried him to his house, wishing to give him a burial, but they refused to admit any corpse into the house, only packed them in ditches and interred them."

More eloquent are the voices of non-Poles, to cite only the poem by Thomas Campbell written in 1799:

"The sun went down, nor ceased the carnage there,  
Tumultuous murder shook the midnight air;  
On Prague's proud arc the fires of ruin glow,  
His blood-dyed waters murmuring far below . . ."

After the failure of the August Uprising, after the horrible massacre of Warsaw in 1944, Europe was silent.

The next bridge after the one built in 1755 was burned by the Prussians who in their flight before Napoleon joined forces with the Russians on the right bank of the Vistula. The Emperor's staff engineers tried in turn to gain control of the river, but the bridge opened on December 31, 1808, ceased to exist on February 7, 1809. After barely five weeks, it was torn down by a flood. The same fate overtook the next bridge, also the work of Frenchmen.

(Please turn to page 10)



Jan Kazimierz Bridge built at Warsaw in 1656. Engraving by F. B. Werner.



Floating bridge built at Warsaw by Adam Poninski in 1775. Water color by Vogel.



## THE BRIDGES OF WARSAW

(Continued from page 9)

The Vistula caught the fancy of Napoleon who already in 1806, at a time when Warsaw was in a period of decline, proceeded in person to the river's edge, having himself marked out a route for his promenade that lead down the Stone Steps. Having reached the Vistula, the Emperor cursed roundly as if in premonition of the difficulties he was to encounter six years later during his retreat from Moscow. There was to be no bridge then, and Napoleon was to cross the river in a boat. Ironically enough, the Emperor's last stay in Warsaw was in the . . . English Hotel, as if in anticipation of those places of residence that the English were preparing for him on Elba and St. Helena.

### A ROMANTIC PARENTHESIS

For a brief moment I shall go back a century and a half earlier to relate a most curious incident. The first Polish poetess, Anna Stanislawska, lived in the right-bank suburb of Praga. Her fiancé—this was in the year 1699—defied a flood to make his way across the swollen Vistula, against a treacherous current, and reach the Praga side. The affected and admiring poetess agreed to advance the date of their wedding.

This highly romantic episode lives on in popular tradition. But literary history maintains silence on this score, stating for example, that the poetess had no fewer than three husbands. We do not even know which of the three was involved in the crossing of the swirling Vistula.

But we are concerned with bridges. In the first half of the 19th century, Warsaw was content to be in a provisional state, taking her bridges in for the winter. For these were temporary and fragile structures waiting for Kierbedz who in 1864 built the first iron bridge across the Vistula. Other bridges came later. They were destroyed by the retreating Russians during the so-called "great war."



Joseph Poniatowski Bridge, Warsaw, blown up by the Germans in 1944.



Gate tower, Joseph Poniatowski Bridge, Warsaw.

Warsaw rebuilt these bridges with lightning speed. In 1920 when the Red Armies stood at the capital's gates, when Poland as always all alone, made a stand against the deluge from the East and saved Europe, the bridges were threatened anew. The victory called "the miracle on the Vistula" saved the bridges, which, beautified and rebuilt, lived to see the beginning of this last war.

New bridges will be built by the new Warsaw. They will be even more beautiful, imposing and wide, for it is Warsaw's task to span the road from the West to the East, and at the same time to defend the West, to be its true bridgehead when the East menaces. The name of Bridge Street, seemingly outdated, will endure forever, indicating that Warsaw wishes to be a bridge between the four ends of the earth.

If I mentioned that all that remains of Warsaw is the place, *locus ubi Troia*, it must be reiterated that the Vistula too has remained—today red and bloody, tomorrow blue and silver and gold, linked with its city for better and for worse, a symbol of Warsaw and of Poland, the most faithful of faithful rivers, broad, majestic, mighty like freedom.

Almost a century ago, in 1847, Slowacki wrote:

"One day when the ice on the Vistula cracked and the bridges were swept away, a miraculous vision appeared on the other side of the Vistula to the Warsaw populace: It was as if the Motherland, unseen for 100 years, and changed into an Angel by the longing of the people, and crowned with the sun by God, stood over the water's edge and stretched her motherly arms toward the people, asking her faithful little sons to lift her and carry her over the Vistula, and let her down in the capital of the Spirit."



# "LIFE AND CULTURE OF POLAND"\*

by S. HARRISON THOMSON, *University of Colorado*

LEDNICKI, WACLAW, *Life and Culture of Poland as reflected in Polish Literature*. New York: Roy Publishers, 1944. Pp. 329. \$3.50.

POLAND has been perhaps more fortunate than some others of the Central European nations in the literary and artistic reception she has met in the West. Henryk Sienkiewicz, Frederic Chopin, Madame Modjeska, Joseph Conrad, Ignace Paderewski, Jozef Hoffman, have been household names in Western Europe and America for several generations. Somewhat belatedly Adam Mickiewicz and Wladyslaw Reymont have assumed their proper proportions. Slowacki and Krasinski are still virtually unknown. Giants of Polish culture have rarely been looked upon as Poles, but rather as great Europeans. We have been charitably inclined to forgive them their polonism.

In this brilliant and moving essay on Polish cultural history Professor Lednicki has undertaken to show how essentially Polish these and other great writers of Poland have always been. The sensitive accuracy with which they reflect the inmost yearnings of the Polish people is made transparently clear. Indeed, as Lednicki shows, the full measure in which each of them mirrors the thought, the poignant bitterness or the hopes of the Poland of his day, precisely measures the degree in which each is typically and fully European.

In developing any such thesis inevitably many currents of Polish and European culture have to be brought together, their essential elements analyzed, and due account taken of divergent external and internal influences. Poland's peculiar geo-political position, peripheral as to Western civilization and medial as between West and East, her frequently tumultuous history, at times glorious, often tragic, the literary and cultural traditions and trends in neighboring as well as in distant lands, the influences of religious devotion and controversy, the vague yet powerful undercurrents of social and economic transformation periodically enfevering the bloodstream of Europe—all these must be disentangled and then rewoven in order to make a story that carries conviction to the mind as well as to the heart. The result of Lednicki's efforts to compass these many and diverse *tâches* is a particularly satisfying and absorbing synthesis, casting light upon many obscure relationships of literary tradition, and showing, as has certainly never been done before in English, the spiritual unity binding Poland irrevocably to the West.

It has become a platitude outside of Poland and under the influence of German scholarship, given a certain sanction by Carlyle, to regard Polish political institutions of the pre-Partition period as on a level with *opéra bouffe*. It is not very difficult for Lednicki to show that these institutions were peculiar by reason of being *more* representative than those of any other European state of the time. It was their very representativeness that made Poland such an easy victim of the totalitarian aggression of the eighteenth century.

Lednicki is at his most illuminating when he undertakes to clarify and illustrate the withdrawal of Polish culture into itself after the sixteenth century, when Poland was the most cosmopolitan, urbane, tolerant and European of all the states of the continent. The change is described as a natural, nationalistic reaction from too much internationalism. The ultimate failure of the Polish *szlachta* and bourgeoisie to sense the direction of European political development may thus

be traced to this self-imposed isolationism. Lednicki is much concerned with the problem of Polish post-Partition historiography—the swing from pessimism to optimism and the frequent adjustments in either attitude necessitated by the tragedy of the Partitions and their bitter aftermath, the Congress of Vienna, the 1830-31 and 1863 revolutions.

Tragic as the Partitions were for Polish life and national integrity the people did draw some lessons from their misfortunes: "the catastrophe awoke Polish consciences and opened the door to everything that was best, honest, energetic, independent." One result of this cleansing self-revaluation was the gradual rise of the peasant from serfdom to the dignity of independence.

To the great modern spiritual leader of the nation, Adam Mickiewicz, a whole chapter (V) is devoted. The universality of his genius, the winsomeness of his person, the purity of his passion for his native land, won the love and admiration even of Pushkin, otherwise confirmed in his dislike of everything and everybody Polish. The next two chapters, VI and VII, are the most moving in the book. They treat more incisively than hitherto in English the life and yearning, the pilgrimage and travail of soul, of "The Uprooted"—the Polish emigration which had to leave the homeland after the failure of the Revolution of 1830-31. The august figure of Prince Adam Czartoryski dominates the whole movement, but we meet also, in addition to Mickiewicz at the Collège de France, Chopin, Slowacki, the sensitive romanticist, Krasinski, the "Polish de Vigny," whose "Undivine Comedy," an ambitious dramatic poem in prose, was, as Lednicki says, "a drama on the uprooted—on beings who have lost their moral roots."

The book closes with an analysis of the place of the intelligentsia in Polish life which has always been an interesting social and cultural phenomenon. Lednicki shows how, though the *szlachta* have usually formed a large part of the Polish intelligentsia, they have by the very fact of their interest in things of the mind, declassed themselves as nobles. Thus a completely new class has been formed. The corollary of this is of course that the Polish intelligentsia draws in continually greater measure from all other classes, thus serving as a reservoir of intellectual and spiritual energy for the whole nation, regardless of social or economic origins. At the moment it would appear that Poland will have need of the resources of this new class in the arduous years ahead.

"This book represents an attempt to seize the movement, to give not so much a definition of it, as a feeling of it, an impression, the aim of which is to show the human truth of the inexhaustible Polish will to live and to create—to create personal and collective human happiness, in spite of all inhuman powers of history and nature mobilized for centuries against this so profoundly unfortunate nation. Poles, like every nation, like every human community, knew errors and sins, downfall and weaknesses in their common and individual life—but there is one trait very particular to them: they were and still are great when facing misfortune. This irrational, religious power of resistance, this boundless Polish enthusiasm, this Polish longing for greatness represents an undeniable justification of the existence of the Polish nation. These faculties of moral exaltation are the best guarantees of its survival and regeneration, as the law of regeneration has become its law. And this is the essential law of life . . ."

—Waclaw Lednicki in his Preface to  
*Life and Culture of Poland*.

\* From *Journal of Central European Affairs*, Volume Five, Number One. University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, April, 1945.



# THE SONG IN THE NIGHT\*

by KAZIMIERZ

WIERZYNSKI



THE Polish Army in Canada was being formed in two places: in Windsor and in Owen Sound. From Windsor one can see Detroit, the high masses of the skyscrapers and the river, as big as a lake. At night mountains of windows blaze across the river. It happened that in this city I came to know perhaps the deepest truth about my country.

It happened under the influence of the talks about the war which I had with General Duch. He can say much; he knows many armies and wars. During the campaign in Poland he fought for the fourth time in his life; in France the fifth time. The General's uniform was worn by a man still young who had fought in Poland as a colonel.

Once I visited him to play a game of chess, but it did not go very well. We were talking about the fact that we are called incorrigible romantics by the world and that people frequently complain that we are difficult to understand. Shortly we had gone so deep into the matter that we pushed the chessboard, on which the figures had long lost their freedom of movement, away, and my host told me about an incident which, since then, I cannot forget. It had to do with the campaign in Poland.

"Now," he said, "this war is a war of five continents and seven seas, as people commonly say. Then it was a war of the solitary Poles. On the twenty-second of September, 1939 we were being pressed by the Germans from the west and by Russians from the east. We were in the center, in the Lublin area, and were making our way south. In such situations there is nothing to fight for, but we then had everything in our heads except capitulation. That alone may seem incomprehensible to some, but that's how it was. That day

we had captured a town forgotten by God called Miasteczko. It lies south-east of Zamosc. In the evening we immediately struck through the forest which began on the highest elevation of the area. I knew from the map that it descended gradually to the south, toward the village Barchaczow. We had been fighting ten days already; it was the usual thing in the Polish war. Before us was the Eighth division of German infantry, partially motorized, with tank reconnaissance units. We were pushing it out of each hiding place with difficulty, but somehow we went ahead.

"The night passed quietly. The next day, the twenty-third, we began further attacks. We wanted to break through with our previous impetus, but the Germans' firepower was too strong. The attack failed, and it was necessary to lie low in the forest until neighboring units moved up from the right and the left. A whole day was taken up by this, and the twenty-fourth of September had come. It was decided then to strike along the entire front. The first attack was entrusted to the left wing. It was to begin the attack at twelve noon and make for the little town Komarow which lay before it.

"I inspected my positions—at that time I commanded a division—and found everything in order. The artillery worked especially well. There was a good deal of it. Three brigades of light artillery and one of heavy—that means something. Twenty-four guns were firing from the first lines, the others from hidden positions.

"We waited for the left wing to begin the attack, but it did not take place. Instead I received a report from the right flank that the Germans had moved and were attacking us. The first lines of the attackers dispersed under the fire of light artillery which fired shrapnel point blank. Despite that the Germans began to infiltrate the forest. The wing was bent, and a counterattack was necessary. Our men were attacking about a hundred or two hundred feet away from my station and threw the Germans back with one push. There began again a nervous waiting. Our neighbors to the left were not giving any signs of life. Twelve o'clock had passed long ago.

"At two-thirty we tried again on our own. We attacked the Germans and at first everything went smoothly, but then it became more difficult. We couldn't beat them out of the dense undergrowth. After two hours the attack succumbed. Barchaczow was becoming more valuable by the minute. What should we do? This contredanse certainly would not bring us any closer; once they go forward, then we. The tension became unbearable.

"All of a sudden, about five, the firing increased unexpectedly, and the news came that the Germans were again attacking our right flank. They were coming up in threatening force. I felt this was a critical moment: either we or they! 'Everyone alive—attack,' I shouted. Everyone went into action: the reserves, a company of sappers, the staff company, a platoon of phone operators, ordnance men, the divisional staff officers and I. We ran toward the right flank, into the center of battle. Bayonets, the Polish specialty, carried the men irresistibly forwards. The artillery threw its fire forward. Our attack brought the whole line to its feet. The attack became general. In my sector we pushed back the Germans with the first blow, then destroyed all resistance completely. I don't know whether any of them got off unhurt.

We cleaned out the forest: on the battlefield we found eighteen light machine guns with ammunition.

"It was getting dark when I returned to my former station. After the hot day a cold wind sprang up; a welcome ally after such work. I sent patrols out. In the distance one could still hear the rattle of machine gun fire. From the reports I received after establishing contact with my units there was no doubt that our victory was complete. Barchaczow was taken and the roads cleared.

"Among the booty we found light tanks, armored cars, and a fleet of trucks. Over thirty prisoners who escaped the disaster were interviewed immediately. Their information only confirmed the completeness of our victory.

"With what joy did I relax then! We were saved. The firing in the distance was dying down. With the wind came the cool night air. A glow was spreading over the sky; Barchaczow, which had been fired by shells, was burning.

"Suddenly, there happened something which I cannot think about to this day without emotion. From the right, from the right flank which had borne the hardest trials in these battles, there floated an unexpected echo. At first it was difficult to determine what noise or shouts were carried in the air. All of us listened in surprise and quickly recognized that it was a song. The melody was becoming ever clearer, even though the wind altered the tones and shattered the words. The echo sounding among the trees repeated from all sides:

Poland is not dead yet.  
While we are alive.

"The song, begun no one knew by whom, was taken up by others; one could hear how it moved among the units invisible in the darkness. I'm an old soldier and have experienced much, but nothing like this has ever happened to me. The well known words resounded in that forest and in that night with a fearful meaning. It was being sung by men who had come through the battle only to confirm their words in a new battle. I listened to the song as though for the first time.

"Listening to the unexpected song I stood a long time without words; and then began walking in the direction from

which it came. The wind rushed through the branches, and the flaming sky was a faultless compass. Before I reached the source of the song, however, the men stopped singing and everything became quiet. The song had passed as quickly as it had come from an impenetrable space."

That was all the General told me about the battle of Barchaczow that evening after the unsuccessful game of chess. Another time I learned that after the victory he had gone to Komarow to discover for himself what had happened with the neighboring units on the left flank. He found there a company of pre-induction trainees, about sixty boys, most of them high school students. They were gathered in a street under the command of a lieutenant. "Please take us with you," they cried, as soon as his car stopped before them.

"I looked at their young faces," he told me, "they were no more than sixteen or seventeen. They even threatened me: 'If you don't, we'll go ourselves.' What was I to do with them? I incorporated them into my troops and ordered that they be spared as much as possible. In the next battle near Krasnobrod twenty per cent of those boys died. It was reported to me that they fought to the end; they, too, confirmed the words of the song. That is our romanticism, perhaps incomprehensible, I don't know," the General finished.

That evening, I returned home slowly. I thought of how, ever since Wybicki in a mazurka which became the national anthem of Poland hazarded a prophecy about the immortality of his country, this song has been sung among us by every generation—bass, tenor, alto, soprano. Their choruses gathered in places unknown to the world, among towns forgotten by God, beneath skies flaming over forests, and waited their turn like a company of soldiers. The song which sprang from them mingled with the groans of the dying, but those who remained alive took it up anew. The theatre of the world perhaps did not listen carefully to the aggressive melody and wondered at the insufficiently understood choristers. But the time had now come when the meaning of the Polish song had become the refrain of universal liberty. The five continents and the seven seas were like the Barchaczow forest, lost among the great spaces of the globe. The sky blazing over the hidden village was now an infallible compass.



\* Condensed from *The Forgotten Battlefield*, by Kazimierz Wierzyński. Roy Publishers, New York, 1944. Pp. 179. \$2.50. Illustrated by Zdzisław Czermski.



## POLAND — THE ALLY WHO LOST

*(Continued from page 3)*

What could more eloquently confirm the loss of Poland's independence than the Potsdam Big Three agreement denying to Poland a fair share of the reparations to be exacted from Germany and leaving it to Russia—Poland's "protector"—to offer to the most devastated country—Poland—a few crumbs from the mighty neighbor's table? What could more strongly underline and make Poland's subservience to Soviet Russia more official?

There is more to it than defeat. There is above all the picture of a nation whose spirit has survived the holocaust

because of a trust and a belief in ultimate justice, and there is now the moral agony added to the physical one, when the nation realizes that it fought and suffered in vain.

It is up to men of good will to stop inflaming the Poles' wounds by telling them that the solution the world has found for them is "satisfactory." It is high time to stop exasperating Poland's silenced despair by substituting the word "realism" for "appeasement." It is high time to start undoing the injustice done to Poland and to talk about

JUSTICE FOR POLAND!

## POLAND HAS EARNED THE RIGHT TO REAL INDEPENDENCE

*(Continued from page 4)*

The First Grenadier Division, the Second Division of Infantry Riflemen and most of the Tenth Brigade of Mechanized Cavalry.

The Third and Fourth Divisions were being organized at the time of the surrender.

The First Grenadiers particularly distinguished themselves in France.

The Second Division of Infantry Riflemen fought its way across the Swiss border only to be interned there. Polish fighter pilots also took active part in the Battle of France. Following the French Campaign, the entire Polish Air Force in France along with part of the Army was transported to Great Britain.

### (3) THE NORWEGIAN CAMPAIGN

The independent Highlander Brigade fought at Narvik. Polish destroyers also took part in the campaign; one of them, the "Grom" being sunk at Narvik.

Transported back to France, the Poles fought in that campaign.

### (4) THE LIBYAN CAMPAIGN OF 1940/41

In 1940 the independent Carpathian Brigade was organized in Syria. After France fell, it went to Palestine, there joining the British Army. From the Holy Land it moved on to Egypt. The fall of Greece prevented its planned participation in the Balkan Campaign from materializing. During the war in the Western Desert, the Brigade helped defend Tobruk, holding out for months in the besieged town until the British offensive in January 1941, when freed, it went on to fight at El Gazala. At the end of March, 1941, it was sent back to Egypt and Palestine where it was reorganized into the Carpathian Division.

### (5) THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN OF 1944/45

Following the Stalin-Sikorski Pact in 1941, General Wladyslaw Anders joined the Polish Armed Forces organized in Russia of former prisoners of war. He formed several divisions, but because of difficulties arising there, the Polish Armed Forces were transferred to British territories.

During the latter half of 1941, the Middle East was gravely threatened, on one side by the expected fall of the Caucasus and on the other by Rommel's African offensive that was not stopped until it had rolled to the very gates of Alexandria.

In this situation the Polish Army in the Middle East, composed of the Polish Army from Russia and the former independent Carpathian Brigade stood ready to protect Northern Iran from the expected German attack out of the Caucasus.

At the end of 1943 when the danger had passed, the Polish Army in the East, reformed into the Second Corps, went to Italy.

From February, 1944 until the war ended in Italy in May of this year, the Polish Second Corps fought in every battle from Monte Cassino to Ancona, in the campaigns along the Adriatic, in the Apennines, and ended by taking Bologna. The Corps' commanding officer, General Wladyslaw Anders,

was named acting Commander in Chief of the Polish Armed Forces.

When V-E Day came, the Polish Forces fighting abroad had reached a strength of 180,000 men.

### (6) THE CAMPAIGN IN FRANCE, BELGIUM, HOLLAND AND GERMANY OF 1944/1945

Following the invasion of Western Europe, the First Armored Division brought more fame to the Polish flag by its decisive action at Falaise and Chambois. This Armored Division was in the vanguard of the Allied offensive until the end of the war which found it deep in German territory. The Second Independent Parachute Brigade reinforced the beleaguered British during the fatal Arnhem Campaign last fall.

### (7) THE "HOME" CAMPAIGN OF 1940/1944

The war "at home" did not end in September, 1939, nor did it ever cease so long as the German occupants held Poland.

Inexorable battles with the occupying forces were resumed by the Underground forces soon after the September Campaign had ended.

Three basic factors distinguished the Underground warfare:

1. General acts of diversion and sabotage, systematically and actively directed and planned all over the country by the Underground Leaders who also were responsible for the secret propaganda among workers deported to Germany.

It consisted of:

- (a) Incessant attacks on the German war effort by destruction of quota records, destruction of factories and machines, wreckage and destruction of the railway system, etc.

- (b) Defense of the Polish population by liquidation of especially troublesome units of the Gestapo, SS, and representatives of the German administration, rescues of political prisoners and prisoners of war, acts of retaliation.

2. Special attacks on the German communications system to the Eastern Front. These actions took place not only in Poland proper, but also extended out as far as the Dni-per, causing serious rear-line communication trouble on the Eastern Front, as well as making difficult the supply and transfer of troops on the Russian front during the greatest German penetration of the Soviet Union.

3. Armed action by the Home Army which disorganized the German rear lines and caused so-called "storms" or local uprisings that wiped out German rear guards during the Soviet counteroffensive. Important instances of such "storms" were the Home Army battles for Wilno, Lublin and above all, for Warsaw.

The Warsaw Uprising of 1944 cleared the way for a Soviet offensive, an opportunity that was not used.

The Battle of Warsaw was the crowning point of the Home Army's armed action. During the 63-day battle, General Bor-Komorowski, commandant of the Home Army, was named Commander in Chief of the Polish Armed Forces. In October, 1944, he became a prisoner of war together with his heroic Warsaw garrison.



## (8) THE POLISH NAVY

When war was imminent in August, 1939, Polish destroyers were ordered to Great Britain. Later Polish submarines also reached English ports. One of the latter was the "Orzel" (Eagle) whose wartime odyssey across the Baltic and North Seas became world-famous. The few ships remaining in home ports were sunk while defending the Polish coast.

The Hel Peninsula, entrusted to the Navy, defended itself the longest of all, until October 2, 1939.

Throughout the war the small Polish Navy fought under the operational command of the British Admiralty. It participated in expeditions, convoys and raids, winning praise from the best seamen in the world.

The Polish destroyer "Piorun" (Thunderbolt) first sighted and opened fire on the German super-battleship "Bismarck," May 26, 1941.

The Polish Merchant Marine too has won high praise for its work during the six years of war.

## (9) THE AIR FORCE

During the Polish Campaign, the Bomber Force cooperated with the Army, mainly in fighting German panzer divisions, maneuvering deep over the flanks and rears of the various Polish operational groups.

The Fighter Force was mainly used as an aerial cover for the Army as well as for Warsaw. The Fighter Force's losses were severe, for the Luftwaffe was greatly superior to it in number. Toward the end of the Campaign, the Air Force was withdrawn to France and Britain.

The Polish Air Force in England renewed combat action during the Battle of Britain. It gained great fame for its work during that crucial point of the war. From that time on, some ten-odd Polish squadrons of various types fought with the RAF until the end of the war. Their deeds are too well known to need recounting here. Less well known, however, are their flights of mercy, bearing supplies to their countrymen fighting the German occupants, particularly during the Warsaw Insurrection.

The Polish Air Force operating from British bases shot down 800 German planes.

In speaking of Poland's strategic contribution to the war, we cannot omit the important services rendered by the Polish Intelligence. Even before the war, this service had begun its special work, while during the war the Home Army gathered and sent news directly to the Western Allies and indirectly to Russia. It became the main source of information

about the German Army on the Eastern Front. For example, the Home Army intelligence first warned the Allies about the V-1 and V-2 bombs as well as of the special plants at Penemünde.

Here too we must mention the campaign of destruction and diversion planned on a large scale and carried out with great success by the Polish Underground. It has been fully acknowledged by the Allies.

Other Polish soldiers of the Underground deserving special mention are engineers and inventors in various branches of the war effort working directly under Allied orders. Then too, the Home Army Signal Corps carried on its work under unbelievably difficult circumstances. How many radio operators paid with their lives, how many Home Army Signal Corps soldiers were lost while sending word out of Poland that the fight would never end until the invader was driven out!

In evaluating the Polish war effort, one must remember that it was organized by central authorities abroad as well as by local leaders in the various districts of Poland, under conditions far different from those encountered by the leaders on the free territory of unoccupied countries.

The mobilization abroad also had a special character. The Polish Armed Forces could not conscript anyone. Only volunteers could swell their ranks. Even so, every would-be volunteer wishing to reach the Army in the Middle East or in France had to show not only good will and an eagerness to serve, but also uncommon courage and a spirit able to overcome difficulties, either in escaping from prisoner of war camps or from occupied Poland across many "green" frontiers. There were, in addition, the difficulties of crossing rivers and mountains, often penniless and in rags. Caught and imprisoned along the way, indomitable Polish soldiers would escape again and again to continue on their way. Many died or were crippled for life during these escapes. All risked their lives for the honor of serving in the Polish ranks and fighting for Poland.

This recruiting system, unique in history, is best proof of the worth and moral strength of every soldier, which in turn gave the Polish Armed Forces their special character.

All units of the Armed Forces reported regularly to the central Polish authorities in London, thus unifying the Polish war effort.

Above all, however, the seemingly detached units of the Polish Armed Forces were united by their common thoughts, will and feelings directed to one goal: the liberation of Poland.

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## "I MADE FINE FRIENDS IN POLAND"

*(Continued from page 7)*

mated alive; several children, two or three years old, were bayoneted and tossed into the flames. But why do I single out these instances?—They are merely typical of what happened all over Poland.

Yet in spite of such terrorism, we still received every assistance and cooperation; precise information regarding the Germans' movements was cheerfully supplied. Finally, the Huns became so apprehensive that they did not dare to appear on the streets at night.

Traitors among the Polish population were rare, though I confess a few such fifth columnists were recruited from the so-called *Volksdeutsche*. Needless to say, such traitors, when caught, were shot without mercy.

It is my firm belief that the A. K. was the strongest and most efficient organization of its kind in the whole of Europe. As a member of the A. K., I received a cordial welcome from

all of the Polish people, regardless of class; the same friendliness from peasants as from members of the intelligentsia. Polish hospitality was unbounded. Let a Pole learn that you were American, Canadian or British, and he would give you the very shirt from his back.

At the approach of the Russians, our A. K. Brigade disbanded. I reported to the Russian military authorities and was granted passage via Lwow and Kiev to Odessa. After a journey of two months I reached British soil.

It was in January, 1945 that I left Poland. I arrived home in Canada in May, 1945.

During those two years spent with the A. K. in Poland, I had a really good time—and plenty of scope to lock horns with the Germans. In Poland, too, I made many fine, loyal, patriotic friends. I sincerely hope that future circumstances may not debar me from seeing those good friends and beautiful Poland again.



# SIX YEARS AGO...

THE NEW YORK TIMES on

## AMERICA AND POLAND

Watching the heroic resistance of the Poles as the German armies march ever deeper into Polish territory, Americans cannot but remember that the dream of "Polonia Restituta," kept alive in every segment of Poland since the three partitions of the eighteenth century, was realized largely through the efforts of the United States. Divided between the Russian, Austrian and German Empires, the Poles fought on both fronts during the last war with one end in view. Both sides promised a free Poland, the Russians with the intention of carving it out of Austro-German Poland, and the Central Powers with the idea of setting up a Polish kingdom in Russian Poland.

The cause of Poland, passionately espoused by Americans of Polish blood and embodied in the well-known figure of the artist statesman, Paderewski, found general sympathy in the United States. One of Wilson's Fourteen Points called for an independent Poland with an outlet on the Baltic. Like Czecho-Slovakia, this second victim of German ambition is partly an American creation, and Americans cannot look on disinterestedly while this desperate nation carries on its superb fight for the boundaries we helped to map and the sovereignty we worked to restore.

The valor of the Poles has been as great in their present ordeal as in the heroic days when, as defenders of the Cross, they turned back the Turks at the gates of Vienna. It has been as great as when Voltaire wrote of the Polish Army: "They lack discipline, experience, obedience, but their strong love of liberty makes them always formidable. They may be conquered, dispersed, or even kept for a time in bonds, but they soon shake off the yoke; they compare themselves to reeds which a storm will bend to the ground and which will rise when the wind drops."

The Poles are still brave to the point of folly. But in the terrible scenes enacted in Poland we see that in machine-made wars bravery is not enough. Men can fight like lions and women can fight like tigers, as Germans admit the Poles have been fighting, but human heroism cannot stand up against a methodical concentration of tanks, machine guns and bombing planes.

The time is past for prodigies of individual courage. The time is past, indeed, when small nations can live at all in a world dominated by force. Poland is the tragic reminder that it was the realists, twenty years ago, who foresaw that a new international order was the only alternative to international anarchy.

—Saturday, September 16, 1939.

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